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Chairman: Mr. Faati (Vice-Chairman) (Gambia)

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In the absence of Mr. Hamid al Bayati (Iraq), Mr. Faati (Gambia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 67: Promotion and protection of human rights (continued) (A/61/36, 97, 220 and 280)

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (continued) (A/61/211, 267, 281, 287, 289, 306, 311, 312, 324, 325, 338, 340, 348, 352, 353, 384, 464, 465, 476, 506 and 513)

(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives (continued) (A/61/276, 349, 360, 369 and Corr.1, 374, 469, 470, 475, 489, 504 and 526)

1. **Mr. Kruljević** (Serbia) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union.

2. Despite Serbia's tireless efforts, in recent years, to improve the situation of human and minority rights, consolidate the rule of law and strengthen democratic institutions, human rights were still not respected in the province of Kosovo and Metohija, where one of the most acute problems was the lack of security for the non-Albanian population. Since June 1999, there had been more than 5,000 attacks on Serbs, many of whom had been killed or gone missing, and Serbs and other non-Albanians had been exposed constantly to intimidation and threats. However, such incidents often went unreported.

3. Serbia was deeply concerned about the continuing impunity enjoyed by most of the perpetrators of ethnically motivated crimes and those responsible for the organization and incitement of ethnic violence in Kosovo and Metohija. Unfortunately, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) did not provide data concerning the number of persons arrested, charged or convicted for those crimes. The culture of impunity and lack of security had created an environment in which the freedom of movement of Serbs and other non-Albanians remained restricted, which negatively affected other basic human rights,

including access to justice, health care and education for minority communities living in microenclaves. Furthermore, there had been scant progress in the investigation of disappearances and abductions of Serbs, Roma and other non-Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija. There was reason to believe that those crimes had been perpetrated by members of the former Kosovo Liberation Army and other extremist groups. UNMIK should spare no effort to investigate those crimes.

4. The protection of private property rights was a further problem; despite court decisions, rightful owners were unable to reclaim their property from illegal users, who refused to cede it. Furthermore, non-Albanian owners were often unable to use their property owing to the lack of security and restricted freedom of movement.

5. Notwithstanding the deployment of international forces in Kosovo and Metohija, for seven years non-Albanians had been exposed to various forms of discrimination and had been struggling to preserve their linguistic and cultural identity in the face of constant attacks on their religious heritage. The distressing human rights situation in Kosovo and Metohija was the main reason why internally displaced persons were not returning to the province. As a result of the ongoing failure of UNMIK to provide the necessary information on implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Kosovo and Metohija, Serbia was unable to supplement its initial report as requested by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Respect for human rights appeared unlikely to be achieved while negotiations on the future status of Kosovo and Metohija were ongoing and indeed hinged on the outcome of those negotiations. Human rights in the province had become a bargaining chip; Serbs had been offered basic human rights in exchange for acceptance of a solution on the future status of the province. Such treatment of human rights was wholly unacceptable and politically dangerous. Peace, security and development in Kosovo and Metohija could be achieved only if human rights and freedoms were ensured. For its part, Serbia would remain actively engaged in all efforts aimed at advancing the cause of human rights.

6. **Ms. Halabi** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the greatest threat to human rights was the selective use of human rights issues by some States as a pretext for

interference in the affairs of others, which was a violation of the principle of sovereign equality as laid out in the Charter of the United Nations. Double standards and selectivity should not be employed in addressing human rights violations. Arbitrary or coercive measures that infringed on the rights of societies under the pretext of protecting the rights of individuals should be eschewed. In particular, developed States should refrain from hegemonic practices in their relations with developing States.

7. Priority should be given to ending the gravest violations, which included ethnic cleansing, mass relocation and colonial settlement. Above all, foreign occupation should be ended because it deprived people of their social, economic and political rights. In that regard, she supported the conclusions of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, which exposed occupation practices that violated international humanitarian law and the provisions of the two International Covenants on Human Rights, and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

8. She also supported the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, and she noted that the interim report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (A/61/340) showed that there were Governments that either implicitly or explicitly encouraged the association between Islam and terrorism. The use of the struggle against terrorism as a cover for the clash of civilizations only benefited the terrorists.

9. The Syrian Arab Republic was a party to numerous international human rights instruments, and the humanitarian standards provided for in those instruments were reflected in its domestic legislation and political system. Dialogue based on non-selectivity and transparency was the only way to ensure that all enjoyed the basic rights and freedoms guaranteed by the International Declaration of Human Rights and its associated international instruments.

10. **Ms. Laohaphan** (Thailand) said that her country remained firmly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy and, following the recent political change in Thailand, would make every effort to restore parliamentary democracy within the shortest possible time frame. A civilian government had been put in place, and work on

a new constitution would soon begin, paving the way for a stronger democracy.

11. As a party to almost all the core international human rights instruments, Thailand continued to strive to fulfil all its international obligations in the area of human rights, including its reporting obligations. Her Government cooperated as fully as it could with the treaty bodies and implemented their recommendations to the extent possible. In addition, it supported the work of the special procedures mandate holders and had invited the Special Rapporteur on the right to health, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography to visit Thailand in 2007. It hoped that those visits would serve as a mutual learning process.

12. However, international frameworks and standards alone were insufficient to ensure the realization of a human rights culture, which needed to be cultivated from within, particularly at the local level. To that end, Thailand was redoubling its efforts to promote human rights education and was planning, among other measures, to hold a national workshop in 2007 to promote the use of the manual on human rights education developed by Austria as part of the Human Security Network, which it had translated into Thai. The national workshop would complement and act as a catalyst for other efforts aimed at disseminating human rights principles among the local population in languages and contexts that were readily understood. The blending of those principles with local traditions, cultures and religious beliefs and with entertainment served as an effective educational strategy, since respect for human rights was strongest and most durable when citizens felt that it was part of, rather than alien to, their daily life.

13. In order to create an enabling environment in which a human rights culture could flourish, the Government was firmly committed to achieving stronger democratic governance, nurturing individual freedoms in the context of social justice and harmony and ensuring respect and equal treatment for minority groups. It sought to achieve greater public awareness and understanding of the spirit and principles of democracy with a view to enabling citizens to act as informed and active participants in decision-making processes at all levels, not only at polling stations. However, the international environment must also

facilitate the cultivation of a human rights culture and, in order to create such an environment, the United Nations must be effective and credible.

14. Her Government had high expectations of the Human Rights Council and the universal periodic review and endorsed the view that the true test of those mechanisms lay in their universality and constructive approach based on cooperation, dialogue, mutual respect and understanding. It hoped that the Human Rights Council would talk less, listen more and act promptly to prevent and address human rights violations. However, the Human Rights Council should not be the only mechanism; the entire United Nations system must be mobilized for the promotion and protection of human rights. In that regard, her Government would welcome greater country engagement of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and endorsed the view that country presence would contribute to improved need-driven monitoring, reporting and provision of technical assistance. It also hoped that OHCHR, through close and constructive cooperation with the United Nations country team and all stakeholders at the national level, would focus more on prevention than on cure and invest greater efforts in human rights education and public campaign activities. OHCHR could do more to provide advisory services and technical assistance to developing countries in support of their national efforts to cultivate a human rights culture, a process that should take into account both international standards and local specificities.

15. **Mr. Al-Shehab** (Kuwait) said that the report on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 (A/61/470) demonstrated clearly that the continued Israeli occupation was responsible for depriving the Palestinian people of the most basic human rights in violation of international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions and United Nations resolutions. It was distressing that Israel was conducting its criminal activities before the eyes of the entire world unrestrained by international condemnation. The most blatant of those activities was the continued construction of the separation wall in violation of the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice ruling it illegal. In addition, the large number of Israeli checkpoints continually reminded Palestinians that their lives were under Israeli control. Israel's continued bombing of Gaza's power, water, health and

education facilities showed its lack of interest in achieving peace. Israel's arbitrary arrest of thousands of people, including women and children, and the poverty in which its policies forced Palestinians to live were also shameful. He endorsed the Special Rapporteur's appeal to the international community to put a stop to these abhorrent Israeli acts and compel Israel to comply with international resolutions.

16. **Mr. Babadoudou** (Benin) said that his country was a vivid example of the improvement in the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms that had taken place in many sub-Saharan countries. The Beninese Constitution had been one of the first to usher in the age of democracy in Africa, and Benin prided itself on its record of press freedom. Full attainment of human rights was a long-term process that depended on the time and resources available and on political will. Once attained, human rights should not be taken for granted, but should be subject to an ongoing process of consolidation.

17. Education and training in human rights were crucial to democratization and the realization of those rights. It was imperative, particularly in new democracies, to teach individuals what their rights and obligations were, and how far they could go in expressing and enjoying their freedoms without infringing on those of others or of society as a whole. Education must enable individuals to view their rights in the context of collective rights; States must therefore maintain a balance between individual and collective rights, which was no easy task. Greater awareness of collective rights, particularly in fledgling democracies, could help to foster a sense of nationhood, which in itself would give impetus to efforts to combat poverty.

18. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights had established the rights of peoples in order to reflect the ongoing search by African societies for a national identity. That process was extremely fragile and required economic support. Given the cost of elections alone, it was easy to understand the problems that African States faced without international support. Unless there was a substantial improvement in living conditions, it might not be possible to continue to advance democracy and respect for all human rights, since people might withdraw their support for those principles. The President of Benin, recognizing that progress in the area of human rights hinged on economic development, had decided to launch an "economic revolution".

19. Economic, social and cultural rights deserved the same attention as civil and political rights. The international community should condemn violations of economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development as strongly as it condemned violations of civil and political rights. Developed and developing countries should share responsibilities with a view to redressing inequalities and injustices with respect to world trade, foreign debt, resource flows and technology transfer.

20. For many years, the countries of the South had been singled out as violators of human rights, yet violations of rights and freedoms were not exclusive to developing countries. Indeed, individual freedoms were being dealt serious blows in the oldest democracies. In order to ensure genuine international cooperation to achieve universal human rights, it was necessary to end the exploitation of human rights issues for political purposes.

21. **Mr. Malmierca Díaz** (Cuba) said that, while the creation of the Human Rights Council was expected to usher in an era of genuine cooperation on human rights, the developed countries were using political manipulation and double standards to impose their biased approach to human rights on others. They were presenting themselves as human rights champions, while applying only half measures to their blatant human rights violations.

22. The wealthiest and most powerful country in history continued to repeat its meaningless, hypocritical and slanderous statements against others, while concealing its many sins. It claimed the right to practise torture as a means of fighting terrorism, detained people arbitrarily and deprived many of them of their most basic rights. Its society tolerated police abuse, racial discrimination, xenophobia and overcrowded jails. It had subjected Cuba to a genocidal economic, financial and trading blockade and shamelessly intervened in that country's internal affairs.

23. The countries of the North behaved as if freedom and democracy were their exclusive preserve and as if they had been granted the authority to judge and determine the political and social systems of other equally sovereign States. That situation had to change, and first and foremost the current unipolar, unjust and uneven international order must be dismantled.

24. **Mr. Mavroyiannis** (Cyprus) said that the international community had rightly acknowledged that human rights, the rule of law and sustainable development were inextricably linked. The introduction of a human rights-based approach in the work of all United Nations agencies and programmes and the establishment of the Human Rights Council were positive developments, and in that regard he fully subscribed to the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

25. The Turkish military occupation of 37 per cent of Cyprus had resulted in the denial of the fundamental human rights of refugees, relatives of missing persons and enclaved persons, the destruction of the religious and cultural heritage in the occupied areas and curbs on the freedom of the press. The right to return to one's home and the restoration of one's property as a means of conflict resolution, peacebuilding and restorative justice were of the utmost importance given that one third of the population had been forcefully driven from their homes by the invading forces and were refugees.

26. The transfer by an occupying Power of its population to the area it occupied was considered a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions and was described as a war crime in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. All means possible must be taken, as a matter of urgency, to alleviate the plight of the people of Cyprus resulting from the invasion and occupation of their territory. However, no measure taken to remedy the persistent violations of human rights could be effective until an end was put to the forcible division of the island. No settlement could be achieved without the withdrawal of foreign troops. Full conformity with individual human rights standards must be an integral part of any comprehensive, functional and sustainable solution to the Cyprus issue. His Government was ready and was doing its utmost to create the right conditions for the resumption of meaningful negotiations.

27. **Mrs. Papadopoulou** (Greece) said that the invasion and occupation of the northern part of Cyprus by Turkey was a violation of international law and that the human rights situation of the enclaved persons living in the occupied areas was of grave concern. While certain positive measures had been taken, more remained to be done. The Government of Turkey had an obligation to conduct an effective investigation into the fate of missing persons and to comply fully with court rulings concerning displaced persons, which it

had not yet done. Construction activity and the sale of illegally seized Greek Cypriot land and properties continued unimpeded. There was an increasing influx of settlers from mainland Turkey, and the island's cultural heritage was being systematically destroyed. Respect for human rights and the rule of law must be an integral part of any solution to the problem.

28. **Mr. Kariyawasam** (Sri Lanka) said that the recent escalation of violence in his country was attributable to the resumption of hostilities by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Despite strong provocation from that group, the Government was exercising maximum restraint and took limited and targeted military action only after exhausting all other peaceful options. It had taken steps to build a national consensus that would lead to a negotiated settlement. The previous week, it had signed a memorandum of understanding with the main opposition party in which the parties agreed to cooperate on settlement of the conflict, electoral reforms and good governance.

29. The Government had also addressed various human rights concerns. With regard to allegations of extrajudicial executions, disappearances and other violations of the right to life, it had decided to establish a national commission of inquiry, which would be monitored by an international independent group of eminent persons. The commission would investigate several incidents in respect of which accusations had been levelled against parties to the conflict.

30. The Government had taken measures to ensure that the populations affected by hostilities had quick access to humanitarian aid. It had facilitated the provision of food and other essential supplies to displaced persons through its own mechanisms or through international humanitarian organizations and agencies.

31. Contrary to certain allegations made by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary or summary executions, the Government had consistently advocated the adoption of a human rights framework by the parties with clear benchmarks and time-bound actions. It did not need to struggle for legitimacy, and it was further strengthened because the opposition had agreed to cooperate in the national interest. It continued to work with its partners to improve its own record and was subjecting itself to scrutiny by being a party to all seven human rights instruments and several protocols and by inviting United Nations human rights

special mechanisms to undertake investigative missions.

32. **Mr. Dall'Oglio** (Observer for the International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that IOM welcomed the outcome of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development held in September 2006, which in many ways had echoed the key messages strongly advocated by IOM, and it looked forward to making the follow-up a success. The recognition and safeguarding of the human rights of migrants would enable those migrants to make a fuller contribution to their countries of origin and destination.

33. The level of human rights abuses against migrants differed significantly at the various stages of the migratory cycle: in the country of origin, during transit, and in the country of destination. Some migrants, usually skilled workers who migrated in order to take up vacant posts in the formal sector, enjoyed a well-managed migration process and therefore experienced relatively few, if any, problems, while unskilled workers were more vulnerable to rights violations, particularly when working in poorly regulated sectors.

34. One of the factors contributing to the vulnerability of migrants was lack of familiarity with the society, language, laws and practice of the host country, as a result of which migrants were less aware of their rights and, consequently, less able to assert those rights. The most vulnerable migrants, particularly victims of trafficking, irregular migrants and other migrants with tenuous legal status, faced physical and psychological abuse, degrading treatment and work conditions and unreported deaths and disappearances, remaining largely unprotected and isolated from society owing to their lack of documentation, their dependence on employers or traffickers and their fear of detention and deportation. Unless appropriate protection, advocacy and monitoring mechanisms were in place, some of the gravest violations of the human rights of migrants would continue unchecked and unreported.

35. It was not easy to address the human rights aspects of migration, particularly the rights of irregular migrants. Efforts to break the vicious circle in which fear of detection and deportation prevented irregular migrants from reporting abuse, thereby strengthening the hand of traffickers and abusive employers, were at

the heart of effective human rights protection. Governments must show strong resolve in combating trafficking in order to ensure that migration took place in conditions of safety and dignity, thus becoming an informed choice rather than a survival strategy.

36. Advocacy, awareness-raising and implementation helped to improve the protection of the human rights of migrants, since the main obstacle to the realization of those rights was not the lack of legal instruments but failure to implement those instruments fully and consistently. A steady capacity-building effort could help to narrow that implementation gap, and in that regard, IOM was working to increase awareness and knowledge of migration law. In order to facilitate dissemination, it had created an online migration law database designed to serve as a research tool for government officials, international organizations and civil society. In addition, it was supporting institutional capacity-building by assisting its member States with legislative reforms, training and administrative follow-up on various migration law issues. One such form of support was the International Migration Law Course, held by IOM biannually in collaboration with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law. The course was designed for government officials, academics, representatives of international and non-governmental organizations and members of the media and civil society. It focused on the international legal framework governing migration, including the rights and responsibilities of States and migrants, human rights and State security. Its key objective was to enhance the expertise of migration practitioners and government officials regarding the importance and use of international instruments in the management of migration.

37. The global nature of migration called for a global response involving greater cooperation and partnerships between NGOs, civil society and other actors. Migrants themselves should be involved in seeking solutions, and their potential role in promoting human rights and contributing to development both within their countries of origin and in host communities should be further explored.

38. Ms. Chenoweth (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) welcomed the attention given to the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, which FAO had incorporated in its

programmes and activities. In order to implement the Guidelines and to support the full realization of the right to food through their application, FAO had established a unit on the right to food and was seeking the cooperation of other United Nations agencies. The strategy of FAO in promoting the right to food was to focus on five key areas: advocacy and training, information and assessment, legislation and accountability, strategy and coordination, and benchmarks and monitoring.

39. FAO commended the efforts made by Brazil, Sierra Leone and Mozambique to implement the right to food, *inter alia* through the establishment of innovative institutional mechanisms. In Brazil, a national rapporteur on food, water and rural land was responsible for monitoring the situation regarding the right to food and participated in the national Food Security Council (CONSEA), which advised the President directly on policies. In addition, the National Congress had recently approved the text of a human rights-based federal law on food and nutritional security. Sierra Leone had established a secretariat on the right to food to advocate for the right to food, facilitate coordination and monitor progress towards realization of the right to food, which was one of the Government's top priorities. Mozambique was revising its Food Security and Nutrition Strategy, and had established a working group on the right to food within its Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition.

40. FAO looked forward to sharing the lessons learned through implementation of the right to food and of the Voluntary Guidelines in different countries. In the past, it had benefited greatly from the contributions and cooperation of other United Nations agencies, particularly the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the World Food Programme, and a range of non-governmental partners in promoting the right to food and drawing up the Voluntary Guidelines. It hoped to expand and strengthen such partnerships in order to enhance strategies for promoting food security. The problem in establishing food security was that the hungry and poor were politically powerless and were excluded from the planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and policies. A human rights-based approach to food security had the potential to empower them to assert their human rights.

41. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the human rights situation in Darfur was steadily improving thanks to the Darfur Peace Agreement and humanitarian and security efforts made by his Government in close cooperation with the international community.

42. The statements made at the previous meeting by the United States and Australian delegations did not serve efforts to bolster stability and security in Darfur. The United States was known to be a large country with a vast record of human rights violations, including abuses against detainees at Guantánamo Bay and secret prisons. It had enacted laws enabling the Government to spy against its own citizens, in violation of the United States Constitution. It had one of the worst records of human rights abuses in history with respect to the rights of indigenous peoples, whom it had annihilated. It also had a history of xenophobia and intolerance, including animosity towards Islam.

43. His delegation did not wish to dwell on those abuses; the record spoke for itself. It hoped nevertheless that problems could be resolved through dialogue and mutual understanding and reiterated its desire to cooperate with the international community in efforts to improve the situation in Darfur. The Sudan was fully aware of its obligations to protect the rights of its citizens. It did not need to take lessons from States which should be focusing on remedying their own human rights situation.

44. **Mr. Kitchen** (Zimbabwe), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the United States of America, a renowned global violator of human rights, was desperate to divert attention from its own record. There was full respect for due process in Zimbabwe. The incident to which the United States and Australian delegations had referred was currently before the courts. The two delegations proceeded from the premise that anything done by them was right. They did not apply to themselves the standards they demanded of others. There had been incidents of anti-war protesters, including elderly women, being beaten up in New York and other parts of the United States. The Bush regime trampled on the rights of United States citizens on the pretext of conducting a war on terror. The United States programme of torture had been well documented. Unlike the United States, the world's best known exporter of torture, Zimbabwe did not maintain secret torture camps. As to the Australian delegation, it had stated before the Committee that the

Government would continue to trample on the rights of indigenous people. The cause of human rights would no doubt be better served if the United States, Australian and like-minded delegations stopped posturing as good guys.

45. **Mr. Chernenko** (Russian Federation), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation wished to clarify the question of Russian legislation on non-governmental organizations, an issue which had been raised by the United States delegation. Implementation of the revised legislation on re-registration of NGOs was being considered by Russian civil society, including through the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, as well as by foreign NGOs and international agencies. The Council of Europe had twice sent a delegation to Moscow during the previous month and had earlier studied the relevant draft laws on NGOs. The Council delegation had been given comprehensive information on the way in which the legislation was being implemented during meetings with the Registration Chamber and civil society, with which they were fully satisfied. According to information from the Federal Registration Service, 99 foreign NGOs operating in Russian territory had been re-registered successfully. Another 96 had provided documents for consideration.

46. It should be noted that more than half of the re-registered NGOs were from the United States, including the Ford Foundation, Carnegie Moscow Center and the American Chamber of Commerce, alongside other well-known Western NGOs. They did not have any particular problems with the procedure. In other words, bona fide NGOs had not encountered any difficulties in complying with the procedure and had already adapted to the new conditions. Russian and foreign NGOs alike were being re-registered in a rather free and open atmosphere, which was in line with similar practices in the majority of democratic countries and did not go beyond international standards governing NGO activities.

47. **Mr. Chaderton-Matos** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that it was difficult to engage in dialogue on human rights issues with the United States delegation, especially as it was the paramount human rights offender. It was enough to recall the horrendous torture practices in the Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay prisons, where such sophisticated methods as sensory deprivation were being applied to extract confessions.

48. The United States of America, through the National Endowment for Democracy, had financed efforts to destabilize his Government. Under the Constitution, Venezuelan citizens participated fully in public life; they enjoyed participatory democracy, were able to monitor their representatives throughout their entire term in office, and could revoke the mandates of elected officials, including the President. The opposition, which was financed from abroad through legal channels, had at one point been defeated in a referendum supervised by the Organization of American States, the European Union and the Carter Center.

49. Concerning the bill on NGOs in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, his Government encouraged international cooperation in strengthening the participation of civil society in public life. It planned to have a national register of NGOs operating within the country. The Supreme Court had decided that NGOs which were involved in activities of national interest should use their own resources to prevent foreign Governments from manipulating them or using them for political purposes. There were other institutions besides the National Endowment for Democracy, such as the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, which had sought to destabilize his Government, in concert with the United States of America and an international Christian democratic movement.

50. He recalled his Government's request for extradition of Orlando Bosch, the Cuban exile currently enjoying asylum in the United States of America, who was responsible for the 1976 bombing of a civilian airliner which had claimed the lives of the 73 people on board. Also living peacefully in the United States of America were Venezuelan military officers responsible for terrorist attacks against the Colombian Consulate and Spanish Embassy in Caracas. Nevertheless, according to the United States, there were good terrorists and bad terrorists, just as there were good walls and bad walls. His Government recognized all NGOs committed to defending the dignity of the individual and promoting human rights education and social justice. There were other NGOs which did not have that sense of international solidarity with people and which were engaged in widening the gaps in democratic systems to maintain their worldwide domination.

51. **Mr. Kim Yong Ho** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), speaking in exercise of the right of

reply, said that the Committee was once again witness to the hypocrisy of the United States and Australian delegations, which pointed the finger at other States claiming to be human rights judges. Yet, the most serious human rights offenders were the United States and Australia, which had invaded other nations and massacred countless innocent civilians, including women and children. Violations of the right to life were the gravest of all human rights violations. To avoid such violations and protect the human rights of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, his Government had built up its national defence capacity, including nuclear deterrence. He urged the United States and Australian delegations to address their own human rights situations before accusing others.

52. **Mr. Zamani** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that no one could be indifferent to the situation of human rights in any part of the world. It was a collective responsibility and common concern of the international community to promote human rights everywhere. Equality, justice and freedom were aspired to by all peoples and nations.

53. With respect to the unfounded statements by the United States of America and Australia about the Islamic Republic of Iran, his Government had always given priority to the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Iranians. Although the centre founded by Ms. Shirin Ebadi had received a temporary permit, the grant of permanent registration would have to await the completion of documents by the centre, and activities had been suspended until the relevant requirements had been met.

54. **Mr. Zhang Yi** (China), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said he regretted that the United States delegation had launched an unwarranted attack against China and other countries with regard to their human rights record. The progress made by his Government in the area of human rights was evident for all to see. Although it attacked other delegations, the United States delegation remained silent about its own serious human rights problems both within its borders and abroad. In the name of counter-terrorism, the United States of America had tightened its surveillance of the Internet, thus violating the privacy of its citizens. It controlled anti-war assemblies, limited freedom of expression, and restricted freedom

of the press. The lives of Muslims in the United States had become more difficult after the attacks on the country of 11 September 2001, and the rights of indigenous peoples were violated systematically.

55. In addition, it detained for indeterminate periods its prisoners of war. In Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, the United States military had killed innocent people and abused prisoners; it had violated the most fundamental human rights, including the right to life; and it had denied permission to various United Nations agencies and special mechanisms to verify human rights situations. The United States delegation had quoted the United States President on the subjects of freedom, the rule of law and the protection of minorities. His delegation hoped that the United States would not be a giant in words and a coward in deeds.

56. **Mr. Aksel** (Turkey), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation had been dismayed by the distortions in the statement of the representative of Greece, who had implied that the Cyprus problem had not existed before 1974. It would be recalled that his Government had encouraged the Turkish Cypriot people to vote in favour of the proposed Foundation Agreement in the "Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem" put forward by the Secretary-General. In depicting the Cyprus issue as a case of invasion and occupation which had suddenly occurred in 1974, the representative of Greece had overlooked the preceding 11 years of suffering of the Turkish Cypriots and had failed to mention the Akritas Plan, a plan prepared by the Greek Cypriot leadership at the time for the purpose of driving the Turkish Cypriot population out of Cyprus and bringing about union with Greece.

57. The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus had had to be deployed on the island in early 1964 when the Greek Cypriots had attacked the Turkish Cypriots. Between 1963 and 1974, the United Nations had attempted without success to resolve the problem. During that period there had been no Turkish occupation forces on the island. On the contrary there had been a Greek division from the Greek mainland. The Turkish Cypriots had been forced to live in enclaves in their own homeland.

58. There had been a military coup in Cyprus in 1974 instigated by the military regime in Greece. To counter that coup Turkey had intervened as a guarantor Power,

acting within its responsibilities under the 1960 agreements to save the Turkish Cypriots from total annihilation and prevent the annexation of the island by Greece. The intervention had put an end to the constant fighting and bloodshed in the island.

59. Human rights violations against the Turkish Cypriots persisted at the present time. The Turkish Cypriots still lived under conditions of inhumane isolation and disenfranchisement. He hoped that the international community would show its full solidarity with the Turkish Cypriot community by engaging in direct economic, commercial, social and cultural contacts with them without further delay.

60. There were also the matters of confiscated Turkish Cypriot property, the systematic destruction of the Turkish Cypriot cultural heritage, including desecrated religious sites in the South, and the denial to Turkish Cypriot pupils of a proper education in their mother tongue in Limassol. The statement by the Greek representative concerning missing persons in Cyprus had been misleading, as she had referred to Greek Cypriots who had gone missing in 1974, not Turkish Cypriots who had gone missing between 1963 and 1974. His Government was anxious to find an overall solution to the dispute.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.